





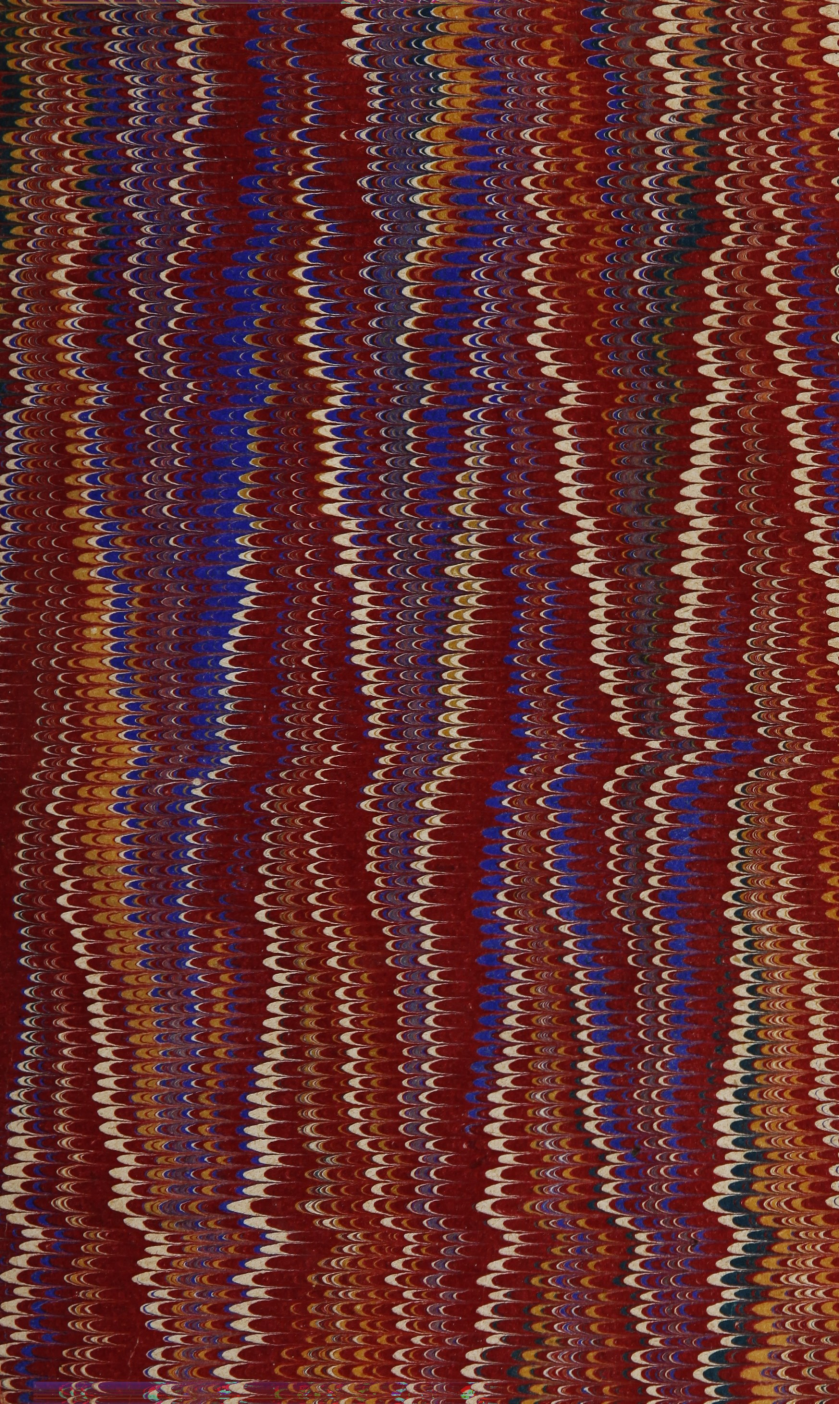
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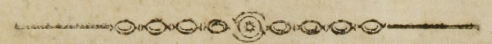


Aspinwall

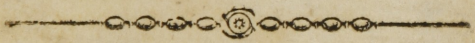




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S. G.



A Medical  
DISSERTATION.



1798





Brookline 27 Oct. 1884

Dr Robert Amory  
Boston

Dear Sir,

Your note of the  
18<sup>th</sup> was duly received, but  
until this time I have been  
unable to answer it satisfactorily.

As I found nothing in  
my family papers relating to  
"George Apinwall", I applied  
to Mr Bradford Kingman who  
is better informed than any one  
I know, upon the subject of  
Brookline & its old families.  
I have just received his reply.  
He says "I have the name of  
George Apinwall - who was  
born April 3 1774 - Died at  
St Helena S. C. Feb. 22. 1816  
Son of Col. Thomas & Lucy  
Apinwall - a





incident of medicine <sup>11</sup> This is  
doubtless the G. A. about  
whom you inquire.

Col. Thos.  
Aspinwall was the brother  
of my grandfather Dr.  
William Aspinwall - I  
owned the farm through which  
Longwood Avenue  
was laid out. The family  
house was on Sewall Avenue  
near Kent Street. It was burned  
down about twenty years ago.

Yours Truly

Wm Aspinwall

Dr. Chadwick  
or  
Dr. Brown.



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DISSERTATION

ON THE

98535

CYNANCHE MALIGNA.

BY GEORGE ASPINWALL.



Dedham :

PRINTED BY MANN AND ADAMS.

1798.

TO  
OLIVER PRESCOTT, *jun.*

PHYSICIAN, in GROTON; MEMBER of the MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL, and MIDDLESEX AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES.

S I R,

*By* the repeated solicitations of several friends, I have ventured to publish this imperfect Dissertation on the Cynanche Maligna.

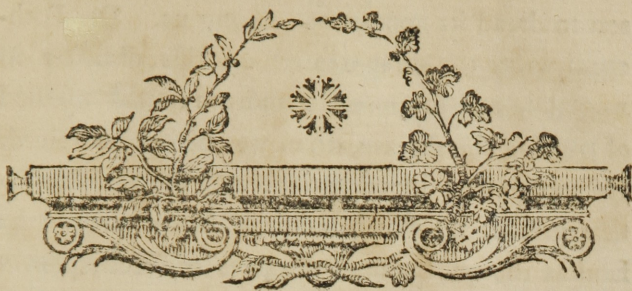
IMPERFECTIONS always need candor and protection :—For the former I appeal to the public, who will consider that it was written during the second year of my pupilage, though under some considerable advantages, as there were many sick with the disorder at that time :—For the latter I with confidence look up to you ; convinced that your singular moral and medical character, combined with your approbation, would be my most sure defence.

ACCEPT, Sir, this small testimony of the obligations and esteem of

Your obedient and humble servant,

George Aspinwall.





## A DISSERTATION.

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NOTWITHSTANDING the Cyanche Maligna has made its appearance in so many parts of the world, has made such terrible devastation, and has been described by so many authors; yet it is but lately that its nature has been well understood, and a proper mode of treatment adopted. In some parts of the world it has proved almost as mortal as the plague; but it is probable the great fatality depended more on the improper mode of treatment, than on the disease itself. Blood-letting, purging, and the antiphlogistic regimen, in general, were formerly adopted as an universal practice; no wonder the disease proved a fatal one.—If the same absurd method was now in vogue, we should have sufficient rea-

son to dread its appearance among us. Dr. Fothergill wrote the first treatise on this disorder in England, and proposed a more rational method of treating the disease, than was before practiced. He condemned blood-letting, and the antiphlogistic regimen, till which time the lancet proved as fatal as the guillotine in the days of Robespierre.

THE many opportunities which have occurred to me, since I commenced my medical studies, of seeing this disease in its different stages, and the successful mode of treatment, which I have seen pursued, induced me to attempt the present imperfect sketch.

THE Cynanche Maligna has been defined a putrid, remittent fever, accompanied with an ulcerated sore throat, or with an inflammation of the mucous membrane,

It is a matter of dispute among physicians, whether it is an universal or local disease. Dr. Rowley says, it is a local one, and supposes all the terrible symptoms attending it, to be the effect of an absorption from the ulcerated fauces. This, however, is not probable; for it is sometimes the case, that all the other symptoms attend the patient, without the ulcers in the throat.

He also says, "it is possible, after receiving the infection, that, like the small-pox, the venomous particles may circulate two, three or more days



in the blood, before the symptoms appear sufficiently evident, to determine the disorder is present."

If the particles, which produce the disorder, are received into the blood, and circulate there several days, before any symptoms appear, consequently, before the fauces become diseased, his hypothesis is left without foundation; for it is presumed that no contagious and putrid matter can circulate in the general mass of fluids, for several days, without producing some alteration in them; and if this alteration takes place, before the fauces become diseased, certainly an absorption from them cannot be the cause of the disease; but in fact, the ulcers must be the effect, and claim no title to the cause of the disorder.

WE shall consider the proximate cause of the disease to be a contaminated air, received into the constitution by inspiration; whether it circulates in the blood several days, before it produces its effects, I cannot say; but that it is in the habit, either in an active, or dormant state, we have no reason to doubt.

THIS contagion, after it is received into the habit, appears to have no limited time to remain there, before it produces the symptoms of the disorder. One person, exposed to the contagion, may be attacked with the disease several days be-

fore another, who has been equally exposed. What this contagion is, and the manner in which it operates, in producing its effects, I shall not attempt to determine; but rather enquire into the nature of the disease it produces.

THE question, which is to be determined, and which is of the greatest importance, is, whether the Cynanche Maligna is of an inflammatory, or putrid nature; prior to which it is impossible to establish any proper mode of treatment: for what would be of advantage in the one case, would do irreparable injury in the other.

THE fauces, when viewed in an early period of the disease, appear to be in a high state of inflammation; this appearance, without attending to the other symptoms, often leads to unconquerable error. That inflammation can arise from debility, appears in no disease more evident than in the present. While the fauces are in this high state of inflammation, the pulse are small and weak, the spirits dejected, and the strength greatly diminished. We have no reason to suppose a diathesis phlogistica to prevail in the system, when we consider, that tonics and stimulants are the only medicines, which will afford relief, which they do very effectually, when given in sufficient quantities. On the contrary, all debilitating medicines, instead of giving relief, aggravate every



symptom; and if persisted in, will soon prove fatal.

AN instance of this nature will appear from the following narrative. In the winter of 1795, I called on a physician in the state of New-Hampshire, with whom I had a partial acquaintance; he informed me, he had buried a daughter the day before, about fourteen years of age. She died of a disease he called the canker-rash. He called in several of his neighboring physicians, to visit her, after the disease had considerably advanced; they being ignorant of its nature, agreed that it was an inflammatory disease, and must be treated as such. Accordingly, the antiphlogistic regimen was rigidly pursued; but through their good intentions, false theory, and bad practice, their patient soon expired. Grieved at the death of his daughter, and fearful of the loss of two other of his children, who lay sick of the same disorder, like a drowning man, willing to grasp a straw, he requested my opinion. On examination, their throats appeared very much swollen, and the greater part of the fauces put on a livid appearance, and in several places were affected with dark-colored ulcers. The fœtor of their breath was insupportable, and the heat of their bodies excessive. Their situation appeared to me not a little precarious, and his mode of treatment added strength to my apprehensions. The anti-

phlogistic regimen had been pursued with avidity ; and he informed me that he had been very careful to administer nitre frequently, and that too in large doses ; but instead of abating the fever, he declared that its violence kept pace with his prescriptions.

INSTEAD of nitre, and the saline antiphlogistics, the most powerful tonics and stimulants were substituted. It appeared strange to the good Doctor to prescribe such large doses of bark and wine, when the fever ran to such a height. He entered on the practice, however, when he found all other means to prove abortive, and saw the imminent danger with which they were threatened. I soon afterwards had the satisfaction to hear, that the medicines had immediate and salutary effect, and both the children had entirely recovered, which, without doubt, must have fallen sacrifices to the disease, unless the practice had been reversed.

CONVINCED from these and many other circumstances, that the Cynanche Maligna is of an highly putrid nature, I shall next describe the progression of symptoms, as they generally occur in this disease, and then proceed to the cure.

ALTHOUGH the attack may vary in some instances, yet cold shiverings, anxiety, sickness and vomiting, are, for the most part, the first appearances of the disease. These are soon followed by stiffness of the neck, soreness of the throat, difficulty of swallowing, and a hoarseness.



THE fauces, when viewed in this recent state of the disorder, appear of a deep red, which commonly soon become affected with small spots of an ash color; and unless a proper plan of treatment be adopted, to prevent their further progress, the parts will soon be covered with deep ulcers, of a very putrid and dangerous tendency.

THE pulse are small, weak, quick, and irregular. The spirits dejected, and the strength greatly diminished. A delirium frequently comes on in the evening, at which time, all the symptoms are commonly aggravated, and in the morning a remission takes place.

ON the second day, and sometimes later, efflorescences appear about the face and neck, and by degrees spread over the whole body. There are some cases where this efflorescence does not make its appearance; and when it does, is considered by Dr. Rowley as artificial.

A CORYZA is often a very distressing symptom in this disease, which sometimes discharges a matter so acrid, as to corrode and inflame the parts over which it passes. We have accounts of its being of so corroding and malignant a nature, as to produce mortification in the parts of those to whom it has been applied.

THESE are the symptoms which generally appear at the commencement of the disease, which, if judiciously treated before they have proceeded



too far, are very speedily removed; but if the disease should be mistaken for an inflammatory angina, and treated as such, symptoms of general putrescency will soon take place, and continue to increase, till death puts a stop to their progress.

AFTER the contagion has been received, and begins to discover itself by the above symptoms, it is then the province of the physician to stem its progress, and bring the disease to a solution as soon as possible.

WHAT first demands our attention is the sickness and vomiting; and till these symptoms are removed, we shall not be able to make such medicines remain on the stomach, as are necessary to remove the disease.

DR. RUSH's method of administering a vomit, joined with calomel, is, perhaps, as proper as any that can be contrived to accomplish this end. By the operation of the puke, a quantity of viscid phlegm, and bile, which is the cause of the sickness, is thrown from the stomach, and the calomel, by cleansing the intestines of any putrid, or other offensive matter, which they may contain, prepares them to receive whatever medicines are thought proper for the subsequent part of the cure.

ALTHOUGH a lenient purge should prove in some degree debilitating for the time, yet the obvious advantages resulting from a gentle operation,

will more than balance any objection which can be brought against it.

IN what manner calomel operates, to entitle it to a preference in this disease, I cannot tell ; but when used in a gargle, it appears to operate in such a manner on the fibres of the parts, as to cause a discharge of their acrid contents, more than any other medicine ; perhaps the same may be said of it when passing through the intestines.

ONE very dangerous practice, which is adopted by some, requires particular attention, viz. the checking too suddenly with opium, the purgings which sometimes take place in this disease. These purgings are commonly the effect of a quantity of putrid, acrimonious matter irritating the intestines, the danger of which, if too long retained, is very evident. Whenever this purging takes place, it is necessary, as soon as possible, to put a stop to it, which must be done by some gentle antiseptic laxative. If detained by opium, the putrid matter will either be absorbed into the system, or by its irritating nature will soon produce an inflammation in the alimentary canal ; the consequence of which it is unnecessary to mention.

AFTER the stomach and intestines have been cleansed (when this has been deemed necessary) our next indications are to support the vis vitæ, and guard the fluids against putrefaction.



SEVERAL particulars are necessary to be attended to in fulfilling these indications.

THE saliva, which becomes contaminated, by passing over the ulcerated fauces, is to be continually ejected, and not allowed to pass into the stomach.

THE cleansing the ulcerated fauces, by some astringent antiseptic gargle, cannot be too strongly inculcated. The advantages of this practice are sufficiently evident.

THE room, in which the patient is confined, should be kept continually ventilated with fresh air, which greatly revives the sick, and abates the tormenting heat with which he is afflicted. Unless this be attended to, the air in the room becomes very noxious, and tends, not only to increase the putrid symptoms of the patient, but greatly exposes the attendants.

THE changing the bed-clothes, and body linen, should be particularly attended to. The patient should be kept as cool as circumstances will admit; want of attention, in this particular, is a frequent and fatal error.

To ensure success, each of those particulars are strictly to be attended to; but what we are to consider our chief support, or sheet anchor, is the Cortex Peruvianus. This medicine has been thought by some to be injurious in the Cynanche Maligna. This opinion has arisen, either from an



ignorance of the nature of the disease, or from a dependence being placed on too small a quantity. Administering the bark in the form of a tincture, or in very small doses in substance, is only trifling with the lives of our patients, and plunging into discredit one of the most noble medicines in the *materia medica*.

DR. RUSH, in his account of the *Scarlatina Anginosa*, as it appeared in Philadelphia in the years 1783 and 1784, observes, that he saw but three cases which required the bark as an antiseptic, and thinks it sometimes hurtful in the disorder. These observations, however, I do not think have the least tendency to lessen the character of the medicine in this disease. Whoever will take pains to read this account of the *Scarlatina Anginosa*, will readily perceive that it was blended with the symptoms of an inflammatory angina, and was of a much less malignant nature than it generally is.

He observes, that the symptoms of several of his patients were so inflammatory as to require blood-letting; and in one case he was obliged to perform the operation twice. It would be as reasonable to suppose the bark would be injurious in the typhus gravior of Dr. Cullen, because it had been known to increase the symptoms of a violent synocha.

IN the account of the Ulcerated Sore Throat, communicated to the Massachusetts Medical Soci-

ety, by the Hon. William Baylis, there is no mention made of the bark ; but I think we have reason to suppose, if he had used it in some cases, in sufficient quantities, he would have discovered a medicine, which he declares he never was fortunate enough to find. He says, “ on the third or fourth day of the disease, should the pulse grow weaker and softer, the face and neck put on a very bloated appearance, respiration grow more laborious, with a peculiar kind of catching the breath, or double breathing, and an anxiety of five or six minutes continuance come on three or four times in an hour, such as induces the patient to bite his hands and arms, death may be expected on the fifth day. This alteration in the disorder is sudden, and not to be foreseen ; and, when it takes place, I never was so fortunate as to find a medicine, that would prevent, or even retard the fatal catastrophe. The skin, after death, would immediately turn very black, and sometimes, previous thereto, would be spotted in many places with green.” Is there a medicine in the *materia medica*, which would have been so likely to put a stop to these putrid and fatal symptoms, as the Peruvian bark ?

THE bark, when used in this disease, is to be given from the beginning in substance, and in as large quantities as the age of the patient, and other circumstances, will admit. Dr. Cullen says, that





good effects are to be expected from it almost only when given in this way. It should always be given in vinous or distilled spirits, when these can be procured; in this way the less quantity of bark is required; it sits more easily upon the stomach, and its effects are more sudden.

DR. MOORE, speaking of the Cynanche Maligna, says, "I have seen the weakness so great in this disease, that the patient could not sit up in his bed, that his throat might be accurately examined, without danger of fainting; yet after a few doses of the bark, mixed with Port or Madeira wine, his pulse became stronger and fuller, and he raised himself with little assistance, and sat up firmly; but in others, in nearly the same situation, double the quantity of the bark taken in any of the simple waters, hardly produced the same effect, and never so soon; and where wine was not to be got, or could not be afforded, rum or brandy diluted seemed in all respects equivalent."

THE bark, when given in wine, or other spirits, may be acidulated with the oil, or elixer of vitriol; care being taken not to make it too strong of the acid.

WINE or other spirits may be allowed in every stage of the disorder, the great heat of the body being no contra-indication.

THIS is the manner in which I have generally seen the disease treated by a very judicious and

fortunate practitioner, whose singular success in this disease, has established the justice of his method.

THERE are not many disorders, for which there have been more *nostrums* in vogue, than for the present ; and there have been no practitioners so unfortunate as those who have ever been trumpeting abroad and publishing to the world the infallibility of their quack medicines.

IN time of great danger, help is always desirable ; but people are too apt to apply for assistance to those ignorant impostors, who are for the time in great, though undeserved reputation ; or without the advice of a physician, apply some patent medicine, from a belief that it can cure almost every disorder ; for the fact is, this kind of medicines are generally inclosed in papers, filled with pompous descriptions of their many and singular virtues, which a well bred physician would call a catalogue of impositions and lies ; for they are often declared to cure disorders requiring exactly opposite treatment.

IT cannot be doubted, that our government are too condescending in granting patents for medicines. The authors are, in general, very illiberal and ignorant men ; and I do not believe that there ever was an honest physician, who was a man of real knowledge, that would permit a medicine, which would be of advantage to his fellow



creatures to remain a secret ; for he would well know that a judicious and well meaning physician, who wished to avoid the breach of the sixth commandment, would not venture to administer a medicine he knew not what, unless from good authority he was convinced that it was a safe and useful one ; but this, with a very few exceptions, seldom happens ; for those quack medicines which in their infancy have such a splendid character, soon contract their orb, which was almost unbounded, to a point of detestation. And it is my humble opinion, that millions have fallen sacrifices to the unhappy trust which they have placed in this description of medicines, who might have had their lives preserved if they would have followed the directions of some skilful physician.

It appears to me very probable, if those gentlemen of *pretended faculty* could see the portrait of their characters perfectly delineated, they would be willing if possible, to retract their past impositions and crimes, and live the remainder of their days in sorrowful repentance.

PERHAPS this may be considered too uncharitable ; but what crimes can be more heinous ? Do they not impose upon mankind the belief that they will soon be cured by certain medicines, of which they are the authors ; which *very belief*, with the omission of those measures which should have been taken for their recovery, deprives them of their lives : what is this but *indirect murder* ?

Do they not exact from the hand of the indigent the last shilling, for that which will be of no advantage to them? What is this but *theft*?

Do they not push themselves forward into poor distressed families, and by their insinuations and *underhand intrigues* often persuade them to dismiss worthy and skilful physicians, with a promise that *they* will cure them in a very short time; and if they do not succeed, do they not attribute the want of success to the improper prescriptions of their predecessors, which they declare have produced some fault in the constitution, which no medicine can remove? (They are very careful, however, to keep this to themselves, till they see death at the door, or think their bills will ballance the estates of their patients.) What is this but *theft*, *slander* and *murder* combined?

If what has been advanced be true (and none but the aforesaid description of men will think otherwise) it is undoubtedly the duty of every physician, who wishes to consult the *welfare* and *happiness* of his patients, to warn them of the danger of prescribing medicines, the virtues and effects of which they are equally ignorant, without medical advice, which is always proper when it can be had from any but those of the above class in which case, it would be more safe to trust to nature herself, though in this disorder she is but a very poor agent. *Finis.*















